**Charles Blanchette – EDC 586 Graduate Credit**

**COOL TOOLS REVIEW AND APPLICATION PLAN**

**The Cool Tools workshops I attended were terrific, providing solid, usable information, and generating many ideas as to how I might apply these in my classroom. Here are a few of my favorites.**

**Gooru – I immediately found Gooru to be a very versatile tool for teachers. For example:**

* Ideal for Credit Recovery lessons for students, especially when the after-school instructor is not familiar with the content. Its like I’m there facilitating directly with the student.
* A great use would be for Enrichment, either a lesson/activity of interest students could work on independently once they’ve completed their regular assignment, or a unit/lesson I could roll out specifically for my RtI Enrichment class
* Create a class collection of lessons/activities
* Differentiation - Provide specific, customized instruction for different level learners within my heterogeneous classroom. I can tier the assignments (ala SRA reading) so students could move and learn at their own pace.
* Great for absent student to stay connected from home and not fall behind.
* Excellent way to create a meaningful sub-lesson for when I’m out. Easy for the sub to use and its not the read the chapter, answer the questions routine which kids hate.
* With all the push on collecting and analyzing student data, Gooru enable me to collect data on tests, quizzes, SLO (Student Learning Objectives) etc.

**Infogram –**

* Excellent for Data presentations (ex: Student SLO growth data)
* I can transfer or input Excel data!
* Multiple types of charts at my disposal
* Map & pin feature very useful in Social Studies
* Countdown feature for uploading specific segments/clips

I can see us using Infogram to track discipline referrals by month/grade/team/gender, etc.

**Google+ -** I love the idea of creating and using Google+ as my personal learning hub and a vehicle for curating quality work, lessons, etc. Its portable, one-stop-shopping for me, my team, colleagues, and students. I loved the idea of me (and students) taking tutorials and earning badges at our pace.

**Loilo –** My students would love Loilo! Its so easy and quick to use. I love how it actually connects (like a mind map) the different pieces of student work, so they can visualize what they’ve done, and what’s missing, edit the sequence, etc. Great for timelines, sequence of events, movement, etc. I’m hoping my district purchased Ipads liked they talked about doing, which would allow me to work with Patricia to get pilot program for my team (100 kids) or my school (1200).

**Symbaloo –** LOVE it.I’ve already set up my Symbaloo for SS. I’m planning on sharing this with my dept. , as I can see how it would be much easier (and more fun) for kids to navigate to get information. I’m hoping to create a Symbaloo for each of the Ancient History and Geography units we do. Also, I think this is a great way for students to create a color-coded, one-stop, personalized Symbaloo where they can curate their own learning page by content, and kid-friendly research sites.

**Screencast –** Sharon Lux and I in our diad utilized Screencast to record/model how we would conduct our research lesson and navigate the various sites. We also modeled how the students would use Screencast as a reflection piece to present to peers. This would be an excellent exemplar for me to use the next time I do the same lesson.

With so many demands on teachers’, parents’, and students’ these days, it is difficult to hold large, after-school exhibits of student work that are convenient and timely. However, I can definitely see using Screencast or a similar digital tool to excite students and engage parents. Parents can actively view the presentations/projects on-line with their child, then submit comments, formally using teacher-designed on-line survey (SurveyMonkey), or informally on a classroom or team blog.